BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 08653 949 9

No. 7581.11

THE TRUSTEES OF THE
PUBLIC LIBRARY
OMNIVM
LVX
CIVIVM
OF THE CITY OF
BOSTON
1852 - 1878

DEC 18

REMARKS,

AND A

DISCOURSE ON SLAVERY,

BY

G. W. BLAGDEN.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.
M DCCC LIV.

REMARKS,

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

AND A

DISCOURSE ON SLAVERY,

7581.14

BY

G. W. BLAGDEN.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.
MDCCCLIV.

2108

Same as No. 2 in 5440.5 24

THURSTON, TORRY, AND EMERSON, PRINTERS.

REMARKS.

Recent events induce me to publish a Discourse preached to those whom I serve in the Gospel, on our annual "Fast-Day," (April 8, 1847,) now nearly seven years ago.

It was the request of some of my friends, that it should be published, at that time. But, I declined to comply with it, principally, from a great unwillingness to enter into any public discussion on this "vexed question;" and partly, because, however fully persuaded in my own mind of the substantial correctness of my views of it, — views not even then hastily adopted, — I was desirous of letting time and experience test their truth, and reverse any prejudices, and allay any undue excitement, of which I might be unconsciously the subject.

The progress of almost every day, since that time; and above all, the developments in our national senate, which drew forth the sentiments of the late and lamented Webster, so nobly expressed by him, on this subject, in 1850, — have confirmed me in the opinions here expressed and enforced.

This whole question, to my mind, wears an aspect far more solemn and responsible than a merely political one — greatly and deservedly important as that is admitted to be. It is a question which, if I am

not deceived, includes in it principles essential to the best influence, if not to the vitality itself, of the gospel I profess to preach. And hence springs the interest I avow, and take, in its ultimate satisfactory solution.

It is often, and properly urged, as one of the corroborative evidences of the Divine origin of Christianity, that it works kindly, yet most effectually, with all the institutions of human society established by human law, wherever that law does not directly and palpably clash with the Divine. Without ever directly breaking them up, and producing sudden convulsions, it surely infuses its purifying and elevating principles into all of them, — reforming long-established abuses; correcting long-indulged errors; and, like a purer air introduced into a bad atmosphere, giving new health and vigor to whatever was suffering from its effects. It is essential to the best influence of the gospel, that this, its characteristic, should be faithfully preserved by its friends in all their efforts to promote it. But, in my own view, it is not thus preserved, by assuming, in our efforts to remove from our country the acknowledged evils of southern slavery, and eventually slavery itself, that it condemns as always and necessarily sinful, the domestic relation of master and slave. Such an assumption is contrary to fact. Its practical influence has been, and is, to produce a course of speech and action, in all who adopt it towards the south, needlessly irritating; and to lead to the conclusion, already openly and somewhat virulently avowed by some among us, that the churches, the clergy, and

the Bible itself, must be cast aside, as faithless and false to the highest and dearest interests of the human race, if they maintain such principles.

I know that it is often said, in reply to this, that the system of southern slavery in the United States is one entirely different from that which existed, by the appointment of God, among the Jewish people. But this, if admitted, by no means alters the principles on which we ought to proceed in the removal of all other systems of domestic servitude. And besides, it cannot be denied that slavery among the Romans, into the midst of which Christianity came — and with reference to the conduct of masters and servants, in which, it gave explicit directions, — was, in many of its features, far more cruel than the system now existing in our own land. And yet the Saviour and His apostles never, in a single instance, directly attacked that system ; but clearly and fully condemned all the sins committed in it, and fully inculcated all the virtues it demanded. In this way, Christ infuses principles into society which will surely arrest and eradicate all its evils, without convulsing it.

This is the true principle for His preachers and His disciples ever to keep in mind, and sustain among men. If they do not, in my view, they are faithless to one of the chief elements of the gospel, and open the door to many evils, and very false ideas of genuine liberty.

Nor will it do to say, as I have heard some intimate, that the Word of God is not intended to inculcate permanent rules for our guidance in the

more advanced stages of civilization. But, that we are to apply to such a system of slavery as exists in this country, the principle that Paul applied to the men of Athens respecting the past systems of idolatry, — that the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commands all men every where to repent. This may be permitted, and is indeed required, in reference to evils directly specified, as those to which it is applied. But, if we presume to apply it to others, and especially to those in regard to which other kinds of directions are given in the Word of God, — we immediately fall into the dangerous error of admitting that there is an "inner light" — which a man may follow — brighter and clearer than that which directly emanates from the revealed rule of Heaven. This I understand to be that dangerous doctrine of the "higher law," of which so much has been said, and which Webster, if I rightly remember, so justly condemned in the United States Senate. He did not mean, in my opinion, to intimate, for a moment, that the Bible was not the law to which all should submit, and which all should obey. But he reprehended the principles and practice of those who, wise "above that which is written," would fain improve on the Scriptures themselves, in their zeal to destroy the system of slavery.

Before leaving this bearing of the subject on the fundamental principles of the Gospel in its progress among men, I must add, that the habit, so prevalent of attacking the relation of master and slave itself, instead of the sins committed in it against God and man, really betrays very superficial views of the

exceeding evil of all sin. For, not in the relation itself, but in the states of mind developed in it, does iniquity essentially consist. And therefore, I most deeply and sincerely fear, that in the sight of Him who looketh not "on the outward appearance," but "on the heart," there is as much of evil, to say the least, often exhibited in the virtuperative and malign language used by ultra anti-slavery men at the North against their countrymen of Christian character and standing, who do not agree with them in their peculiar theories, as ever works itself out from the knotted lash of a Southern slave-driver! "Suppose ye that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they suffered such things? I tell you nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

I close with the remark that there are, in my apprehension, many persons in this community, who really adopt the principles avowed and vindicated in this pamphlet, but whose words in respect to slavery are, perhaps, misunderstood, and certainly misapplied, so as to inculcate very opposite doctrines, and a corresponding practice. Indeed, it has been one of the lamentable facts on this subject in New England, that many have been so deeply impressed with the enormity of the sins and evils connected with slavery in this country, that in their language, and sometimes in their acts respecting it, they have given influence to the principles of those ultra abolitionists among us, some of whom would willingly disband the churches of Christ, and disclaim the Bible itself as a rule of faith and practice.

G. W. B.

Boston, March 1, 1854.

DISCOURSE.

COLOSSIANS, III. 11.

"WHERE THERE IS NEITHER GREEK NOR JEW, CIRCUMCISION NOR UNCIRCUMCISION, BARBARIAN, SCYTHIAN, BOND NOR FREE; BUT CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL."

In the proclamation of the Governor, appointing this annual Fast, he invites the people to pray to God, "That He will restrain the limits of slavery in our own, and in other lands, and hasten the time when the interests and the happiness of the Master and Slave shall be advanced by bursting the chains of every bondman on the face of the earth."

We have accordingly united in prayer this morning, that God would be pleased to remove the many and great sins and evils connected with the system of slavery in our own and in other countries, and earnestly and I trust sincerely and acceptably asked, that He would break the arm of every oppressor, and let the oppressed go free.

Whenever we offer such a petition, it is essential to its efficacy, that it be offered intelligently and scripturally. And I have therefore felt it my duty, as the whole subject has been brought so directly before our minds by our Chief Magistrate, to direct your

attention this morning, first, to the sins and evils connected with the system of slavery in our country; and secondly, to the scriptural principles which should guide us in our prayers and efforts to remove them.

The time has come, I think, when I may, with propriety, speak directly, clearly, and fully on this interesting topic. And in doing so, all I ask is, that you will allow me to hope that you will be kind enough to hear me patiently and candidly; — and then, like the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures, whether the things I speak are so. (Acts 17: 11.)

Certainly on a topic of such vital interest to religion, and the moral as well as political welfare of our beloved country, a minister of the gospel ought to have an opinion; and is bound on any proper occasion, and in a proper spirit to declare it.

First. The sins and evils of slavery, in this country, are great, extensively acknowledged, and widely felt.

In no circumstances, and in no relation of life, can man be safely trusted with so much irresponsible power over his fellow-man, as that with which every slaveholder is invested, in our Southern States; and as that with which slaveholders were clothed in our own Commonwealth not much more than sixty years ago.

Wherever man wields this power, such is the tendency of our nature, that he becomes greatly insensible to many of the evils into which he himself falls, and which he may be constantly, and often unconsciously, inflicting on others.

In the present case, and in respect to the evils endured both by the master and the slave in our own country, this is strikingly seen.

There is good evidence, that, in many cases, the marriage relation is broken, by the unnecessary separation of husband and wife, without regard to law. In most, I believe in all of the Slave States, it is an offence against law to teach the slaves to read; and although religious instruction is allowed to be given, to any extent, by preaching and every other form of speech, and is given happily, and with blessed effects to a very great extent in such forms; yet the Bible of course cannot be circulated and read, and all that religious and intellectual improvement which results from such a blessing is withheld. Children are often sold into bondage, at a great distance from their parents, and parents from their children. Families are broken up. The most cruel punishments are sometimes inflicted, under the influence of uncontrolled passions. Great facilities are afforded for licentiousness, and little motive presented and enforced for the doing of the good which Christians have an opportunity to do to a large and increasing mass of their fellow-beings.

The masters themselves are, in many cases, aware of these sins and evils, and groan under them. In many instances they are doing what they can for their removal. But in too many other cases, they seem to be either entirely insensible to their existence, or they openly and passionately defend them; and virulently oppose all agitation of the question of duty respecting this increasingly important subject.

At the same time no reasonable man can deny, that the system of slavery, in a number of the Southern States is, as it respects the political economy of the subject, entirely a losing one. While in its moral effects, though it may possibly be favorable, in some degree, to the promotion of a doubtful kind of chivalrous and hospitable character in masters, yet its tendency is to hurt essentially the promotion of a vigorous and persevering tone of mind; because it brings manual labor of every kind into disrepute, and tends to cherish the false idea, that the highest moral and intellectual refinement may not be reached by due care, in every department of human effort.

But I need not enlarge on the sins and evils connected with the system of slavery, at present existing in our native land. They form a theme for passionate declamation and oratorical display, which affords one of the best opportunities that has ever been offered, for public speakers of warm feelings and vivid imaginations to distinguish themselves. Too many, I fear, have eloquently exposed and deprecated the evils, without troubling themselves to go into that patient study of the whole subject, which alone can lead to those proper distinctions between things that differ, that can effect any permanent remedy. This is the principal reason why it will be profitable for us, this morning, to consider this subject; a subject which has seemed to me, for years, to have been so prolific in false and unscriptural, and very dangerous modes of reasoning and acting in many good men, that every one who would love his country with a Christian patriotism, is bound to do

all in his power to obtain for himself, and disseminate among his fellow-citizens, correct views of it.

To do this, so far as I may be capable of doing it, I ask your attention, —

Secondly, — to the scriptural principles which should guide us in our prayers and efforts to remove the sins and evils we have been considering.

I say the scriptural principles which should guide us, because, speaking as I do to a church and religious society, it is my wish to take only a religious and moral view of the whole subject. This must, of course, have its bearing on much that is political in respect to it. But into the political part of it, it is not my province, even were I capable of it, to enter. That should be left to other persons and places.

What, then, are the scriptural principles which should guide the Christian churches and societies of our land in their prayers and efforts to remove the sins and evils connected with southern slavery? This is the question to which I ask your attention.

And the text, I think, includes in it all that is necessary to a clear and satisfactory reply.

It declares, that in the new man, — or that regenerated state of mind produced by true obedience to the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, of which the apostle was treating when he wrote it, — "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."

And in teaching this, it does but repeat a truth the apostle had before enforced in almost the same words on the churches in Galatia; that in Christ there is

neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: but men are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3: 28.)

Now I hold these passages to teach, beyond all reasonable doubt, — especially when they are compared with a number of other declarations of the Word of God — that in promoting true obedience to the gospel of Christ among men, and of course all those political, social, and domestic reforms incidental to its advancement, neither their natural, nor their civil and social relations are ever to be suddenly interrupted or directly attacked; but Christian preachers and churches are simply and carefully to aim at the sins against God and man committed in these relations.

You will notice that the text fairly implies that it is, and will be, just as certain that the political and social relations of which it speaks may, and probably would exist under the gospel, as that the natural relations of which it speaks would exist. It implies it to be just as probable that there would be, under the gospel, men who were bond, and men who were free, as that there would be males and females, Jews or Greeks, Barbarians or Scythians. And it just as clearly affirms that the gospel, in its true nature and influence, had nothing directly to do with either. But all that it had to do was, to make every man to whom it came, — whether bond or free, Jew or Greek, Barbarian or Scythian, a new creature in Christ Jesus: or, — to use the words immediately introductory to it, and with which it is immediately connected — to make every one "put off the old man with his

deeds; and put on the new man, which "is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." That is, it is just as possible for men to be renewed in knowledge after the image of God, by whom men are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, when they are bond or free, as it is when they are Jews or Greeks, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarians or Scythians.

It is not at forms that the gospel mainly looks, but at realities; not at outward, natural, domestic, or political relations, but at spiritual and eternal relations: not at the things which are Cæsar's, but at those which are God's; not at the natural or conventional relations men hold to one another, but at the religious relations they sustain to God. If these last be right, there is not the least ground for reasonable doubt but that all the others either are, or shall be, in due time, right also.

This, then, is the leading, the fundamental principle, which should guide us in all our prayers and efforts to remove the sins and evils connected with slavery, here or elsewhere, — in this or other lands.

If faithfully followed out, it will imply and require several things, and avoid a number of dangerous evils, to which I now ask your attention.

It will imply and require, that in praying and striving to remove the sins and evils connected with slavery, we do not assert that the relation of master and slave is, in all cases, and necessarily, a sinful one.

This, I am persuaded, has been a fundamental error with multitudes on this subject. Appalled and shocked as they have been at the many sins and evils

connected with slavery, and determined as they have been to oppose and root them out, they have been unable and unwilling to suppose for a moment that slavery could ever exist, in any form or circumstances without them, and therefore have loudly called slave-holding, in all circumstances, a sin against God and man.

And yet, nothing can be more unscriptural than such a position; nothing more at variance with what a number of the most pious and gifted men have believed, in the light of the Scriptures; and few things more prolific of many threatening evils.

The position that the connection of master and slave is necessarily a sinful one, is unscriptural.

It is so, first, because God Himself, who cannot look upon iniquity but with abhorrence, once positively recognised and appointed a system of slavery among the Jews. And, however He may have suffered long with certain practices among His ancient people, which were not wholly agreeable to His will, for the purest and best reasons, no one will have the hardihood to affirm that He would ever have positively commanded any thing in itself sinful.

And yet nothing can be more clear than the plainness with which He said to the Israelites: — "Both thy bondmen and bondmaids, which thou shalt have shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye

shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondman forever: but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor." (Lev. 25: 44 – 46.)

We know that it is often said, that this was an arrangement of the Old Testament dispensation, to be entirely done away with under the clearer light of the gospel of Christ, as our Saviour abrogated polygamy; and that it is folly to go back to the Levitical dispensation with the hope of advocating slavery now.

But to this we reply, that independently of the fact we have already cited, that while God was pleased only to bear with polygamy for a season, He positively instituted a system of slavery among the Jews, which He never would have done, had it been in all cases positively and absolutely sinful. Independently of this, our Saviour did not abrogate slavery under the New Testament, as He did abrogate the Jewish custom of a plurality of wives.

So far from this, His inspired apostle not only teaches us in the text, that the relation of master and slave, or bond and free, might be expected to exist under His gospel, but He also repeatedly gives directions to masters and slaves how to bear themselves towards each other, as fellow-disciples of the same Redeemer; saying to them among other things, and in the very chapter from which the text is taken — "Servants, (δοῦλοι) obey in all things your masters according to the flesh: not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but with singleness of heart, fearing God." (Ver. 22.) And then, in the first verse of

the next chapter — "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."

No candid person will deny that the word "servants" here, and in most (if not all other) places in the New Testament, means slaves. Nor will any such person affirm that these slaves, though their form of servitude differed in some respects from that which prevails in our own country, at the present time, were less exposed to cruelty than our own.

Both the Greeks and Romans had the power of life and death over their slaves: and the punishments to which they were subjected under cruel masters, were far more severe than any which prevail in this country. Their masters often extorted confession from them by torture. "Whips and thongs were not the most dreadful instruments of punishment. Burning alive, is mentioned as a punishment in the pandects and elsewhere." "The noses, ears, teeth, or even eyes, were in great danger from an enraged master. Crucifixion was frequently made the fate of a wretched slave for trifling misconduct, or for mere caprice."—(*See Slavery among the Greeks and Romans, in Biblical Repository*, Vol. vi., p. 421, 422; Vol. v., p. 149, 150.)

Now if, notwithstanding all this, the inspired apostles of Christ, (however they would have condemned and exterminated all such cruelties as these,) nevertheless so far recognised the relation of master and slave, as to direct and exhort them how to behave in a Christian manner to one another, who will be

so presumptuous as to say, that the relation of bond and free must be, in itself, and always, sinful?

We never read similar directions and exhortations in the New Testament, addressed to a plurality of wives of the same husband: and why? Because after our Saviour's prohibition of the practice of polygamy, it became sinful. Surely, therefore, the apostles would never have exhorted men how to behave themselves toward one another in a relation which was, in its essential nature, sinful.

Accordingly, as has been already intimated, we find many men, of the best characters, and most comprehensive minds, strenuously maintaining the position here assumed; and, what is quite satisfactory, doing it in circumstances different from our own, and in places where it would not perhaps, by many, have been expected.

The late Mr. Canning, in a speech delivered in the British House of Commons in 1826, said — "It is impossible, whatever may be men's wishes or feelings, it is impossible to maintain, for a moment, that slavery and the Christian religion are incapable of existing together. They do exist together; they have existed together from the very first dawning of Christianity; they have existed together down to the present time. The spirit of that religion, Christianity, is to tame the proud, and to assist the lowly; but it does not do that by sudden changes, by the destruction of existing systems, by revolutions of danger and of blood. It mounts the throne of all the Cæsars, it can comfort the poor captive in his cell, but it has been preached in the streets of ancient Rome, at a

time when *servi cruciantur* was the ordinary process of the forum."—"Neither the tenets of the Christian religion, nor the spirit of the British Constitution, call upon Parliament to abolish slavery, at the risk of public safety, or private wrong."—(*See Canning's Life*, Vol. ii., p. 252.)

At an earlier time, Bishop Watson, who so well defended Christianity and the Bible against Gibbon and Paine, expressed similar sentiments. He said in a speech delivered in the House of Lords—"God cannot authorize injustice. But he did authorize slavery amongst the Jews; therefore slavery is not opposite to justice. Nor am I certain that slavery is any where expressly forbidden by the letter of the New Testament. *Man-stealing* is, indeed, expressly forbidden to Christians, as it was, under the penalty of death, forbidden to the Jews."—(*Anecdotes of the Life of Bishop Watson*, p. 377.)

The celebrated historian, Prideaux, in writing of the Jewish sect of the Essenes, says, in exposing their errors—"They forbade marriage, which God had ordained from the beginning, and absolutely condemned servitude, which the holy Scriptures of the New Testament, as well as the Old, allow.—(*Prideaux*, Vol. iii., p. 480.) And Calvin writes, in his Institutes—"Why is it that the same apostle who, in one place, exhorts to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage, in another, enjoins servants to 'care not for their servile condition;' except, that spiritual liberty may very well consist with civil servitude? 'In this sense,' he adds,

'we are likewise to understand him in these passages, — "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female." Again — "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumscision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but Christ is all, and in all; — in which he signifies, that it is of no importance what is our condition among men, or under the laws of what nation we life, as the kingdom of Christ consists not in these things." — (*Calvin's Inst.*, Book iv., Chapter xx., paragraph 1st.)

Other more modern instances of the same kind might be cited, but these are enough; * and they are brought forward here to show that this view of the teachings of the Bible has been taken by wise men, and ripe scholars, in places and times remote from the exciting causes which might warp our conclusions, in this country, at this time, by the power of prejudice and passion. The great reason, why this view of it seems to me important to be taken by all of us is, that it will give great advantages, and save from very common and wide-spread dangers, in all our prayers and efforts against the sins and evils of slavery.

Some of them, we shall now briefly name.

1. Such a position will powerfully commend itself to the consciences of the holders of slaves.

Say to the enlightened and conscientious person, who sustains such a connection with any of his fellow men, — The system, under which you now live, is one in which the sanctity of marriage is very

---

* See Note at the close of the Discourse.

generally disregarded; men are not taught to read the word of God under it; the nearest and dearest family ties are often ruthlessly torn apart under it; licentiousness greatly prevails; the most cruel punishments are often inflicted; and above all, the spirits of immortal and accountable beings, like yourself, are very generally trodden down and crushed by it. Say such things as these to him, and you commend yourself to his conscience in the sight of God. He feels it. He laments it. He is ready to ask you, What shall I do? He is, as many such even now are in our country, ready for some kind of action.

But take the other course; — and begin to say to him, that just because he owns slaves, he is a heinous and aggravated sinner against God and man; — exclude him from your communion if he be a professing Christian; — close your pulpits against him, if he be a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; — refuse his contributions to missionary or any other benevolent societies, because you say they are the price of blood, wrung from the arteries and veins of fellow-men; — refrain from bidding him God-speed in his efforts to build up and multiply Christian churches, because some in their communion are holders of slaves; — take such positions and assert and carry out such principles as these; — begin thus to condemn as sinful an outward relation among men, recognised by human law, as Christ and his apostles never did, — instead of condemning the sins committed in that relation, — and calling to repentance for them, which they always did; — proceed in such unscriptural and unwise ways as these; —

and what hold can you reasonably hope to have upon the conscience of such men? We might almost ask with the Apostle Paul, on another subject, — "Doth not even nature itself teach you," — "it is a shame?" Imagine that the same amount of time, talent, and passion which have been spent in this country for some years past, in unscripturally denouncing all men who live amid the evils of slavery, had been spent in "reasoning with them out of the Scriptures" respecting the sins and evils connected with the system, and how much more good would have been done! How much more evil have been prevented!

It was my intention, in showing the evils from which the view of slavery now advocated would save us, as we pray and trust to remove the sins connected with it, to speak of several dangers which probably every one of you has noticed: — all as I think, growing out of the single unscriptural position, that slaveholding is always a sin against God and man. But they can only now be briefly named.

It would save us from an unchristian and inconsistent censoriousness. To some forms of this, allusion has been already made. I cannot but add to these, the unchristian inconsistency of many of the citizens of our mother country, — who with thousands of her inhabitants starving to death, partly, if not principally through their own misgovernment of them, in the relation of subjects, are disposed to exclude many of our preachers of Christ from their pulpits, and religious conventions, because they come from a land where there are slaves, — who live in perfect

moral as well as physical bliss, contrasted with many of the ignorant and degraded among their own countrymen!

2. The position we advocate would save us from acting on wrong religious principles.

It would lead us to feel and act as if we felt, that the most awful sin against God is confined, pre-eminently, to no relation of human society, recognised by human law, but that it may, and alas, too often does exist and operate in all of them. It is very striking and instructive to notice how the single false principle I have been trying to expose, has operated in many of its advocates to run into religious error — and strive to overthrow the churches of Christ, and the Christian ministry, — calling them sometimes, "dumb dogs that will not bark;" how it has led many of them to deny the moral obligation of the Sabbath, and entirely to desert the public worship of God; and induced them willingly to unite with all men, I may truly say, of all kinds of character, if they would only agree with them, in their one unscriptural principle, — that every man who holds a slave is a sinner above all other sinners, because he suffers such things.

We may rest assured, that there is something radically wrong in any principles which produce such effects as these. The view I have taken exposes the error, and if we heed it, we shall, so far as our influence may extend, save ourselves and others from its evil consequences.

It was my wish to show, that this view will also save from false ideas of political freedom.

But there is not time left me to speak of so important a subject with sufficient care. I must, however, call your attention to the fact, that the whole tendency of the modes of reasoning into which the error I would expose leads men is, to attack existing human laws, — in some cases, to try and overthrow the very Constitution of the country. And I would call your attention to the consistency of such persons; for, they stand to their principles. If the relation of master and slave be, in all cases, a sinful one, then it is not to be tampered with in the Constitution, or any where else, — since "we ought to obey *God* rather than man."— and should never "follow a multitude to do evil." Their consistency therefore is, at least, to be respected. They fairly follow out their own conclusions; while others, who admit their premises, shrink from the consequences.

To such extremes men always will run, whenever, wise "above that which is written," they are not submissive to the true principles of the eternal Word of God. For myself, I have no doubt, that the very elements of those false views of what constitutes true liberty, which produced the French Revolution, are hidden, like a serpent in the grass, in the false modes of reasoning produced by the error I oppose. It is full of evil, in its nature and tendencies.

What, then, is the conclusion at which I would arrive?

It is, that in condemning the sins of men, and calling them to repentance and to Christ, we are to let the outward relations of society, as established by

human law, alone, and faithfully condemn the sins committed in those relations.

We are to condemn the sins, with the utmost faithfulness, — whether the sin be oppression, — or the breaking up of the family state, — or the marriage tie, — or the withholding of the Bible, — or religious instruction from fellow-men, — or the failure to do them good, in any form, as men may have opportunity.

In respect to these and all other sins against the eternal laws of God, we are to "Lift up the voice like a trumpet! cry aloud and spare not; and show God's people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins."

But, in doing this, we are to let all outward distinctions, recognised and established by human law, whether that of king and subject, or master and slave, alone. As Christian preachers of "Christ crucified," and Christian churches and societies, we have nothing to do with them.

Neither Christ nor His apostles ever interfered with them.

In the times of Timothy some thought differently from this; and therefore Paul said: — "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to whole-

some words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." (1 Tim. 6 : 1 – 5.) AMEN.

NOTE.

WEBSTER said, in his speech of March 7, 1850: "At the introduction of Christianity, the Roman world was full of slaves, and I suppose there is to be found no injunction against that relation between man and man in the teachings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ or of any of His Apostles. The object of the instruction imparted to mankind by the Founder of Christianity was to touch the heart, purify the soul, and improve the lives of individual men. That object went directly to the first fountain of all the political and social relations of the human race, as well as of all true religious feeling, the individual heart and mind of man." (*Webster's Works*, Vol. 5, p. 330.)

The late distinguished German Biblical Scholar, and Ecclesiastical Historian, Neander, writes, in his work on the "Planting and Training of the Church:" — "In speaking of the various relations of life, in which men might be placed at the time of their conversion, Paul lays down as a rule, that that event should produce no change in this respect. Christianity did not violently dissolve the relations in which a man found himself placed by birth, education, and the teaching of Divine Providence, but taught him to act in them from a new point of view, and with a new disposition. It effected no abrupt revolutions, but gradually, by the power of the Spirit, working from within, made all things new. The Apostle applies this especially to the case of slaves, which it was more needful to consider, because, from the beginning, that gospel which was preached to the poor found much acceptance among this class, and the knowledge imparted to them by Christianity of the common dignity and rights of all men, might easily have excited them to throw off the earthly yoke. Likewise, in this view, Christianity, in order not to mingle worldly and spiritual things together, and not to miss its main object, the salvation of the soul, did not presume to effect by force a sudden revolution in

their condition, but operated only on the mind and disposition. To slaves the gospel presented a higher life, which exalted them above the restraints of their earthly relation; and though masters were not required by the Apostles to give their slaves freedom, since it was foreign to their ministry to interfere with the arrangement of civil relations, yet Christianity imparted to masters such a knowledge of their duties to their slaves, and such dispositions towards them, and taught them to recognise as brethren the Christians among their slaves, in such a manner, as to make their relation to them quite a different thing.

Paul, therefore, when he touches on this relation, tells the slave, that though by the arrangement of Providence he was debarred from the enjoyment of outward freedom, he should not be troubled, but rejoice that the Lord had bestowed upon him true inward freedom. But, while he considers the latter as the only true freedom, in the possession of which man may be free under all outward restraints, and apart from which no true freedom can exist, he is very far from overlooking the subordinate worth of civil freedom, for he says to the slave, to whom he had announced the true, the spiritual freedom, "But if thou mayst be free, use it rather;" (1 Cor. 7: 21.) Which implies that the Apostle viewed the state of freedom as more corresponding to the Christian calling; and that Christianity, when it so far gained the ascendancy as to form anew the social relations of mankind, would bring about this change of state, which he declares to be an object of preference." (*Planting and Training of the Church*, Book III. Chap. 7th.)

APR 13 1917